

Roll Call

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Leaders of two caucuses in favor of trade reform on Tuesday pressed House Democratic leaders to include "Buy American" provisions in their forthcoming jobs package, which top Democrats have signaled could come as soon as next week and total as much as \$160 billion.

Rep. Mike Michaud (D-Maine), chairman of the House Trade Working Group, and Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa), chairman of the Populist Caucus, say in a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) that rising unemployment can in part be attributed to American jobs being shipped overseas.

"We have an obligation to create jobs in America. While some would argue that Buy American is nothing more than a trade protectionist label, it is clear that these provisions would equate to greater investment and greater job-creation within the U.S.," they said.

The two caucuses have a combined membership of well over 100 and boast prominent Members, including Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and Rules Chairwoman Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.).

But so far, the Buy American pitch hasn't gained much traction in negotiations on the still-developing jobs bill, which is expected to include an extension of unemployment and COBRA benefits, among other items being hashed out behind closed doors.

"Haven't heard one word in leadership talks so far," a senior House Democratic aide said of the Buy American language.